

*Sub  
CD*

*a1*

- (b) administering to the subject a safe and effective amount of a compound that acts through the VPAC receptor.

Please amend the following claims:

*a2 Sub 59*

16. (Amended) The method for increasing skeletal muscle mass or function according to Claim 27 in a subject in which such an increase is desirable, comprising:

- (a) administering to the subject a safe and effective amount of said compound selected from the group consisting of a VPAC receptor agonist, a compound that prolongs or augments the activation of VPAC receptors or the activation of a VPAC receptor signal transduction pathway, an expression vector encoding a functional VPAC receptor, an expression vector encoding a constitutively active VPAC receptor, a compound that increases expression of VPAC receptors, a compound that increases expression of VIP and a compound that increases expression of a VIP analog.

*a3*

18. (Amended) The method for treating skeletal muscle atrophy according to Claim 28 in a subject in need of such treatment, comprising:

- (a) identifying a subject in need of treatment for skeletal muscle atrophy; and  
(b) administering to the subject a safe and effective amount of compound selected from the group consisting of a VPAC receptor agonist, a compound that prolongs or augments the activation of VPAC receptors or the activation of a VPAC receptor signal transduction pathway, an expression vector encoding a functional VPAC receptor, an expression vector encoding a constitutively active VPAC receptor, a compound that increases expression of VPAC receptors, a compound that increases expression of VIP and a compound that increases expression of a VIP analog.

## REMARKS

### Invention Synopsis

The present invention relates to the use of VPAC receptors to identify candidate compounds that are potentially useful in the treatment of skeletal muscle atrophy and/or useful to induce skeletal muscle hypertrophy.

### Amendment

The above amendments simply claim the meets and bounds of the present invention. Support for New Claims 27 and 28 can be found throughout the specification. For example page 7, line 8 through page 8, line 4; page 25, lines 8-14; and page 35, lines 1-20 all provide support